

New Study Reveals Majority of Drivers Demand Radio in Their Cars

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(Xperi)

As AM/FM fights for its future in the dashboard, a new study shows that a majority of American drivers consider radio an uncompromisable part of their automobile as a “third space” and would not even consider buying a car without over-the-air radio.

Xperi’s DTS has released a new report examining how consumers view their personal vehicles beyond transportation. The findings, based on a survey of over 3,200 US car owners, show 92% of respondents consider

their vehicle important, with Gen Z and luxury vehicle owners most likely to view their cars as “third spaces” – environments separate from home and work that offer opportunities to relax and entertain.

Despite changes in living and work environments, 61% of respondents expect their vehicle to eventually serve as an extension of their office or living room. Only 19% indicated they might give up car ownership in the near future.

As for how consumers use their vehicles for personal well-being, 41% of respondents spend 30 minutes or more alone in their car to relax, making it the most common use outside of vacation trips. Meanwhile, 30% have parked in a quiet location to de-stress, while 29% have driven without a specific destination to clear their mind.

Audio remains the top entertainment choice, with 88% of respondents using their car for listening, and 62% stating they would immediately rule out buying a vehicle without AM/FM reception. Per Edison Research, radio **continues to dominate** in-car ad-supported audio, accounting for 86% of listening time. Among drivers aged 18-34, AM/FM maintains a significant share with an 82% share.

Video consumption in vehicles is also rising, increasing from 31% in 2022 to 47% in 2024, largely for short-form content while parked. Road trips often include longer viewing sessions for TV shows and movies.



DTS identifies key features consumers want to enhance their vehicles as third spaces, including personalization options, expanded entertainment choices on par with TVs and mobile devices, and voice command functionality – something to keep in mind for radio operators.

Xperi General Manager of Connected Car Jeff Jury noted, “Consumers continue to value their vehicles as a personal haven. Automakers have the opportunity to enhance this experience by providing intuitive content, personalized options, and seamless infotainment integration. With Gen Z leading the charge in viewing vehicles as third spaces, these advancements are critical for ensuring personal vehicle ownership remains a priority for future generations.”

The full “Vehicle Ownership and its Role as a Third Space” report is [available through DTS](#).

